



Assessment of Socio-economic condition of tribal community: Empirical evidence from Tribal community oriented areas of Netrokona, Bangladesh

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General Note



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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to know the socio-economic status of tribal people. Kalmakanda upazila under Netrokona district of Bangladesh has been selected as a case study area situated in the east border area of Bangladesh where the indigenous Hajong and Garo people are living. For eras, the Hajong and Garo have been the “Adivasies” of Bangladesh who maintained Sanatani religion. Today nearly cent percent of the Garo people practice Christianity. Fifty tribal households were selected randomly for data collection. Primary data were collected from a set of structured questionnaires to know their socio-cultural status. Specially, discussion was made with old age witty people of the tribal as well as secondary data were obtained through reading various tribal magazines and history. From the observation, this study observed that socio-economic condition of the tribal is getting better day by day. Though there are some problems having in the area like poor communication, unemployment, electricity, social security, and pure drinking water but primary health and education condition look enough good as well as socio-cultural bonding with in tribes is also very strong.

Keywords: Livelihood, social sustainability, ethnic minority, ethnicity, poverty

1. INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh being the home for diversified cultures constructed and oriented its nationhood and political perspective basing on the secularism from the very beginning of its emergence (Sarker, et al., 2020; Islamet al., 2020). It couldn't accommodate its citizens indiscriminately in terms of religion and ethnicity in its nation building process neither in British nor the Pakistan era (Sultana, et al., 2017; Sarker et al., 2018; Rahman et al., 2018; Sarkeret al., 2020). Being one of the 45 ethnic minorities of the country, the Mandi's (Garo) tried their best to contribute to this nation building process. But, they suffered the most from the British to Pakistan and later Bangladesh by social, political and economic domination. Their social values replaced by Christian ones, politically they had been made paralyzed and missionaries reoriented their mindset as political (Chenet al., 2019; Kamruzzamanet al., 2019; Sarkeret al., 2020). This ethnic entity is generally known to others as 'Garo' which is the outsider's word and imposed onto them. They call themselves 'Mandi' or 'A.chik Mandi'. They introduce themselves to outsiders as 'Garo' but to themselves as 'Mandi' (Partha & Hossain, 1970). Literally the term 'Mandi' means 'human being' and 'A.chik Mandi' means 'hill people'. Mandis have a history of existence in this sub-continent long before the British take over (Palet al., 2017). The Mandis, with matrilineal social system belong to the Bodo group and member of Tibet-Burman race and are said to have been cradled in north-eastern China (Sarkeret al., 2018) between the upper rivers of Ho-Wang Ho and Yangtse-Kiang had paved a long way in the history to settle a stable homeland time to time and struggled much (Caoet al., 2019; Sarkeret al., 2018; Sarkeret al., 2019).

The origin of tribes is adjacent to middle Asia mainly China. Then they shifts in “Tibbet”. That's reason we called Tribes are the aborigines of the country (Shafiet al., 2020). Due to scarcity of food and other basic human needs they dispersed in the subcontinent region (Alamet al., 2019). Tribes are ethnicity quite Different from the local people (Hossain, 2002). The anthropologists and other social scientists use the term “ethnic group” or “ethnic community” instead of the term “tribe”. Each indigenous may be small but it has a distinct culture and heritage (Shafi, Sarker, & Junrong, 2019). About the number of ethnic groups as stated by different authors from time to time has a wide variation which is often puzzling. Twelve types of ethnic groups are now dwelling in Bangladesh. Both perhaps used personal estimates. According to government official statistics, the present number of ethnic communities is 30 but as the same group has been listed twice in different names. Tipra and Tripura are the same, and Marma, Mog or Mogh are also the same ethnic group. The spelling of “Koch” ethnic group in Mymensingh has also been written as “Coach”. Many previous studies have been published in socio-economic issues (Cooper, 2002; Ballabh & Batra, 2015; Palet al., 2017), reconciliation (Short, 2003), tribal people (Abuet al., 2007), livelihood issues (Chakrabartyet al., 2019; Sheret al., 2015), deforestation (Dey, 2008) and socio-economic transformation (Ballabh & Batra, 2015) but almost no focus on the socio-economic drivers of tribal community living in Netrokona, Bangladesh. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to know the socio-economical, livelihood and income sources of the tribal peoples in the area.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Geographical Features

The area is selected to collect information for the socioeconomic study of indigenous people's livelihood and their sociocultural activities are to serve the purpose set for the study. The areas were purposively selected from Kalmakanda upazila of Netrokona

district, Bangladesh (Sarker & Ghani, 2009). The study was conducted in two unions at ten villages namely: Rampur, Gabindapur, chengree, Kharnoai, Sannaspara, Bot-tola, Bamangaon, Uttar-ranigaon, langura. Bhansankura from kalmakanda upazila of Netrokona district, Bangladesh (Figure 1). The major reasons for selecting these areas for the present study are the availability of the tribal people in these areas, the areas were well known communicated for the researcher, which helped in free movement and data collection, this area was isolated from the such type of study, cooperation from the respondents was expected to be high and possibility of getting reliable data, and this areas is typical for the tribal of Garo and Hajong.

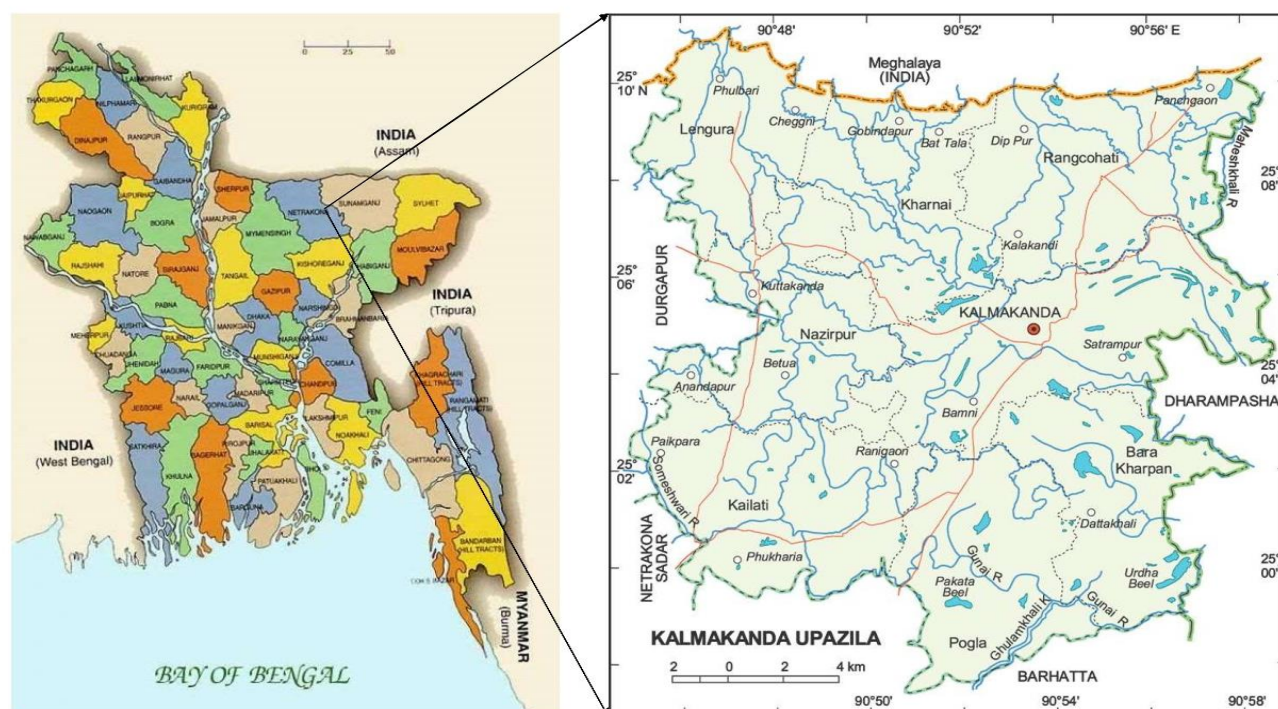


Figure 1. Tribal community oriented study areas in Bangladesh

Source: <http://rhdcbd.org/old/maps.php>

2.2. Preparation of Survey Schedule

An interview schedule was prepared in such a way that all the information relevant to the objectives of the present study could be collected and then the draft schedule was re-corrected. The schedules were finalized after necessary correction, motivation and adjustment. Various types of items were taken under consideration such as identification of the respondent, family profile, diversification of livelihood, asset and income generation, expenditure and consumption pattern of the family, government organizations (GOs) and non-government organizations (NGOs) activities, availability of electricity, sanitation and pure drinking water, relationship among other people and problems faced in their daily life (Ghosh, Hossain, Sarker, & Islam, 2020).

2.3. Period of the Survey

The data and information collected in respect of their sociocultural and socioeconomic study of the tribal people. Finally data were collected through personal interviews, observation, participation their sociocultural program during August and September, 2018.

2.4. Sources of Data

For the present study, sources of data were both primary and secondary in which primary sources were used as the main source. The primary data were collected by the direct observation and interview from the respondents of the study area. The secondary sources were various publications, journals, thesis and Wikipedia.

2.5. Sample Selection and Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling technique was used for sample size determination. The questionnaire survey of the total of 50 sample respondents were conducted by direct face to face interview by using a pre-designed questionnaire.

2.6. Method of Data Collection

Primary task in materializing objectives was collecting data by interviewing 50 tribal people in the local of research and interviews were normally conducted in respondent's house in their leisure time. At the time of interview the researcher asked question systematically. And explained whenever it was felt necessary. Tribal people hardly let know the outsiders their own situations. They often hide truth about them and have a fear of insecurity especially when they face officials. Under such circumstances, the following precautions were taken before collecting data: (a) personal contracts with educated tribal leaders, influential community leaders were made for to let them understand about the study to be undertaken; and (b) previous deeds favored in acquaintance and establish friendly relation with tribal community and proceed to enlist tribal and finally collection of data during the month of September and August, 2018 with the help and cooperation of the influential tribal people.

2.7. Processing of Data

After completion of consistency and completeness, summarization and necessary summary tables were made. Tabular analysis based for weighted averages, percentages, Liker scale and Z-test, necessary graphs also been presented. Collected data were categorized then tabulated and analyzed in term of the objective set for the study. Statistical measures like sum, average, weighted average, Z-test, percentage and sometime ratio were calculated as these were simple to understand and easy to calculate (Chenet al., 2020). This analysis includes socioeconomic characteristics of tribal people.

3. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Demographic Features of Tribal Community

There are mainly two types tribal Garos and Hajons. Respondents are found maximum in middle aged persons. Family member of the tribal area are in smaller in number. Education level of the tribal are maximum up to primary and secondary level. Occupational background of the tribal shows their dependency on agriculture (Chakma & Maitrot, 2016). Land ownership of the respondents are maximum in landless to marginal. Majority number of tribal income is less than ten thousand per family. Most of the tribal family expenditure is less than ten thousand taka. Monthly saving is also lowest per family of tribal (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the Tribal people

Demographic characteristics	Categories of respondents	Respondent number	Percentage
Age	20-35 Years	8	16%
	36-50 Years	18	36%
	51-65 Years	19	38%
	Above 65 Years	5	10%
Family size	Less than 3 Members	17	34%
	4-6 Members	30	60%
	Above 6 Members	3	6%
Literacy level	Illiterate level	9	18%
	Primary level	14	28%
	Secondary level	16	32%
	Higher Secondary level	4	8%
	Graduate & Above	7	14%
Occupation	Govt. job	6	12%
	NGO job	10	20%
	Agriculture	27	54%
	Business	4	8%
	Others	3	6%
Farmer Type	Large Farmer	1	2%
	Middle Farmer	2	4%
	Small Farmer	4	8%
	Marginal Farmer	19	38%
Income level	Less than BDT 10000	26	52%

	BDT 10000-20000	15	30%
	BDT 20000-30000	4	8%
	BDT 30000-40000	5	10%
	More than BDT 40000	0	0%
Expenditure level	Less Than BDT 10000	36	72%
	BDT 10000-20000	12	24%
	BDT 20000-30000	2	4%
	BDT 30000-40000	0	0%
	More than BDT 40000	0	0%
Monthly saving	Less Than BDT 5000	39	78%
	BDT 5000-10000	10	20%
	BDT 10000-15000	0	0%
	BDT 15000-20000	1	2%
	More Than BDT 20000	0	0%

Types of the respondents are an important matter of the tribal because of variation of religion, custom, values, food habit, social system and others. In this area mainly found two types tribal. These are Garo (Mandis) and Hajong. Age of the respondents is an important factor of any study, because it involves with experience and ability of the respondents earning. The age of respondents of the tribal of this area varies from 20 years to 65 years. It shows 16% of the respondents are in 20 to 36 years, 36% of the respondents are in 36 to 50 years, 38% of the respondents are in 51 to 65 years and 10% respondents are above 65 years. In this area middle aged persons stay in the home for their business like agriculture, job and other functions. Most of young person stay outside of the home for education, garments job and other functions (Palet al., 2017). The family can be defined as a total number of individuals living together, taking meals united and living the control of person as its head, it includes husband, wife, son, daughter and brother, sister, parents etc. It shows that 34% had less than 3 members, 60% had 4 to 6 members and 6% have above 6 members. Family size found in majority cases are smaller in number.

Education helps an individual to become awareness information about the recent information and technology. To examine the educational status of the tribal people, the educational status of tribal households was divided into five categories. It shows the educational level of the tribal people (Dey, 2008). Those who cannot read and write considered as illiterate. From table 18% tribal people are illiterate. Primary and secondary level are 28 and 32 percent which is indicate the greater part of the people of tribal in this level. Higher secondary and graduate level are 8 and 14 percent which is indicate low level of higher education. Primary and secondary level educational institutes are available in the area but lack of higher educational institute. Economic status is main cause in lack of higher study. NGOs are support up to primary level not more (Chenet al., 2020).

The main occupation of the tribal is agriculture. The major crops grown in this area such as rice, wheat, vegetables, sugarcane, watermelon, cucumber, pineapple, citrus and fruits. It shows that 54 percent of tribal people are engaged in agriculture, 10 percent are NGOs jobs 6 percent are government employee and rest of the business and others occupations. NGOs activities are very much visible and play vital role in the socio-economy of the area. Land ownership of Bangladesh is five categories. These are (a) landless having 0-.05 hectare of cultivable land without household; (b) marginal having .05 to 1.5 hectare of cultivable land; (c) small are having 1.5 to 2.5 hectare of cultivable land; (d) middle are having 2.5 to 5 hectare of cultivable land and (e) large having more than 5 hectare of cultivable land. It shows that most of the respondents are landless farmer that is 48 percent. Marginal are 38 percent which is near able landless farmer. This result indicates that in the area of the people are lower land owner and economically poor in nature (Bal, 2007).

Monthly income depends on income generating activities like larger land ownership, business activities and job services percent. In this area land size is very small. Business and job facility are very limited in the area. It shows that most of the respondent are last category of income which is 52 percent, 30 percent of respondents are income in BDT (Bangladeshi Taka) 10000 to 20000 per month; 8 percent are BDT 20000 to 30000 per month; 10 percent are BDT 30000 to 40000 per month and more than BDT 40000 per month is nil. Monthly expenditure depends on his/her monthly income. In this area of the respondent income is laid in least category so monthly expenditure naturally is lower. It indicates that monthly expenditure of the respondent of the tribal laid in lowest category. Less than BDT 10000 expenditure per month of 72 percent respondents. 24 and 4 percent of respondents are laid in BDT 10000 to 20000 and BDT 20000 to 30000 per month expenditure respectively. Monthly saving also depends on the family income if family income is high then saving may high in general. Saving vary from man to man somehow some people frugality in nature some are miser in nature. It shows the saving tendency of the tribal people. Since income is lowest category so saving is low

in generally. 78 percent of the respondent are laid in less than BDT 5000 saving per month. 20 percent are laid in BDT 5000 to 10000 saving per month and 2 percent are in BDT 15000 to 20000 saving per month.

3.2. Socio-Economic Scenario

3.2.1. Tribal Community's Access to Socio-Economic Resources

Sources of income generating facilities aren't available in the area of the tribal (Chakma & Maitrot, 2016). Communication facilities in the area is not enough good. Scope of employment opportunities are not available in the area for the tribal people (Adnan, 2007). Educational facilities of primary to secondary level as much as good. Primary health facilities of the tribal is enough good. Electricity supply is not available in the tribal area. Pure drinking water is not available in the society of the tribal area. Sanitation facilities of the tribal as much as hygiene (Ahmed & Ampadu, 2019).

In terms of income generating facilities, the calculated value of Z is -.952 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is lower than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is accepted. This result indicates that sources of income generating facilities aren't available in the area of the tribal. For communication facilities, the calculated value of Z is -.952 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is lower than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is accepted. So, it state the respondents condition of the Communication facilities in the area is not enough good. In case of educational facilities, the calculated value of Z is 3.03 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is higher than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is rejected (Table 2). So, the calculate value understand that educational facilities are available in the area of tribal (Sher et al., 2015).

Table 2. Tribal community's access to socio-economic resources

Statements	Description of Respondent					Weighted Average	Standard Deviation	Z-test (Calculated) value)	Z-test (Critical value)
	Strongly Agree	agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree				
Sources of income generating facilities are available in the area of the tribal	6%	28%	14%	52%	0	2.88	1.01	-.839	1.96
Communication facilities in the area is enough good	2%	42%	10%	30%	16%	3.04	1.18	-.952	1.96
Educational facilities are enough in the area of tribal	0%	70%	6%	24%	0%	3.46	1.073	3.03	1.96
Health facilities are available in the area of tribal	4%	70%	4%	22%	0	3.56	.875	4.527	1.96
Scope of employment opportunities are available in the area	0%	22%	10%	62%	6%	2.48	0.9	-4.09	1.96
Electricity supply is available in the tribal area	2%	44%	2%	8%	44%	2.52	1.459	-2.33	1.96
Pure drinking water is available in the society	4%	44%	10%	38%	4%	3.06	1.06	0.39	1.96
Sanitation facilities of the tribal people are hygiene	14%	82%	0%	22%	0%	4.42	.895	6.64	1.96

In case of health facilities, the calculated value of Z is 4.527 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is higher than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is rejected. So, it state the respondent's condition of the health facilities are available in the area of tribal. In terms of scope of employment opportunities, the calculated value of Z is -4.094 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is lower than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is accepted. So this estimated value understand that the scope of employment opportunities aren't available in the area for the tribal people (Herrfahrdt-Pähle et al., 2020). For electricity supply, the calculated value of Z is -.952 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is lower than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is accepted. At this reason, electricity supply is not available in the tribal area. In terms of availability of pure

drinking water, the obtained value of Z is 0.398 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is lower than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is accepted. So, the calculated value stated that availability of pure drinking water is not so easy for the tribal of the area. In case of sanitation facilities, the calculated value of Z is 6.64 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is higher than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is rejected. So, the estimated value indicate the respondent they enjoyed sanitation facilities are very much hygiene (Gutta, Kothapalle, Goru, & Kadali, 2019).

3.2.2. Institutional interventions in the tribal oriented areas

Social security is not sufficient for the tribal people (Sarker & Jie, 2017). Women are very much participation in decision making of family. Very limited of Government services for the tribal. Respondents are very much satisfied of NGOs services in the area of tribal. Tribal are not habituated in terms of cosmopoliteness practices. In case of Social security, the earned value of Z is -1.71 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is lower than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is accepted. So, it state the respondent's condition of the social security isn't sufficient for the tribal people (Sarker et al., 2019). In terms of women participation, the calculated value of Z is 13.91 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is higher than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is rejected. So, the calculated value indicate that women in the society enjoyed participative decision making facilities in the society of the tribal (Sarker, 2019). In case of public organization's participation, the calculated value of Z is -7.839 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is lower than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is accepted. So, it state that Government organizations offer various services especially for the tribal is very limited. In terms of services of NGOs, the calculated value of Z is 10.67 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is higher than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is rejected (Table 3). So, it state the respondents of the tribal they are very satisfied by the services of NGOs in the area (Sarker et al., 2019).

Table 3. Institutional interventions in the tribal oriented areas

Statements	Description of Respondent					Weighted Average	Standard Deviation	Z-test(Calculated value)	Z-test(Critical value)
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree				
Social security is sufficient for the tribal people	2%	34%	4%	58%	2%	2.76	.99	-1.71	
Women in the society enjoy participative decision making facilities in the society	6%	88%	2%	4%	0%	3.96	0.48	13.91	1.96
Government organizations offer various services specially for the tribal	0%	8%	14%	66%	12%	2.18	0.74	-7.839	1.96
Completely satisfied by the services of NGOs in the area	18%	68%	10%	4%	0%	4.0	0.66	10.67	1.96
Tribal are habituated in terms of cosmopoliteness practice	10%	32%	10%	48%	0%	3.04	1.19	0.236	1.96

In case of cosmopoliteness practice, the calculated value of Z is 0.236 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is lower than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is accepted. So, it state that the tribal people of the area they are less habituated in terms of cosmopoliteness practices that means they are come in upazila and district sadar limited (Sultana et al., 2017).

3.2.3. Challenges and Community Network Conditions

Relationship among tribal and non-tribal people in the society is not good. Various types of distortion are faced by the tribal in the area. Tribal enjoyed in their festivals spontaneously.

Table 4. Challenges and community network conditions in Tribal oriented areas

Statements	Description of Respondent					Weighted Average	Standard Deviation	Z-test(Calculated value)	Z-test(Critical value)
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree				
Good relationship among tribal and non-tribal people in the society.	0%	34%	0%	66%	0%	2.68	0.95	-2.38	1.96
Various types of distortion faced by the tribal people.	0%	28%	4%	68%	0%	2.6	0.89	-3.17	1.96
Tribal enjoyed in their festival spontaneously.	84%	10%	6%	0%	0%	4.78	0.56	22.56	1.96

In terms of social network, the calculated value of Z is -2.388 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is lower than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is accepted. So it stated that relationship among tribal and non-tribal people not so smooth (Priyadarshini & Abhilash, 2019). Sometimes create unfriendly situation in the society (Siegler, Lama, Knight, Laureano, & Reid, 2015). In case of distortion facing, the calculated value of Z is -3.174 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is lower than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is accepted. So this analysis indicate that the tribal people of the area they are suffer various types of distortion like land encroachment (Soman & Anitha, 2020), social harassment (Takwate, 2018), political and economic deceits (Uskul & Cross, 2020). For festival enjoyment, the calculated value of Z is 22.56 and critical value of Z is 1.96. As the calculated value of Z is higher than its critical value. So the null hypothesis H_0 is rejected. So, it state that the tribal people enjoyed in their festival spontaneously and encouragingly (Lakshmi & Paul, 2019).

4. CONCLUSION

The tribal of the Garos and Hajongs are rich in own culture. Their socio-economic condition is not so good. Their main occupation are agriculture so they are economically vulnerable in nature. Social security of the tribal people is not so sufficient. They always in threatened by majorities. Pure drinking water is paucity of the area and in dry season become is very tough. Scope of employment opportunities is very much scarcity for the tribal. Working facilities are limited in the area. Infrastructural development and communication facilities are narrow although these are first condition of development of locality. Electricity is not covered the total area of the tribal it is great problem in the area. Educational facilities are not as so good. Various types of NGOs functioning in the areas. As a result, tribal are greatly influenced by these activities now a days. Tribal are uplift in the sanitation, primary education, health awareness, social security and cosmopolitans etc. Women of tribal are very secular in taking decisions and equal participation in families working. Women of tribal are worked in cropping field with men there is no social hesitation and impede. Garos are Christianity in religion. They are spontaneously participation in religious festival. Christmas day is a great day of Garos. Before time they was Hindus. Some are stay still Hinduism. Hajogs are Hinduism in religion. They are enjoy religious festival as much as Hinduism like Durga puja, Mansha puja, Sharashathi puja etc. Both tribes are very much simple, honest, royal, industrious and sacrificing in mind.

5. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Following are the recommendations considering the above findings:

1. Income generating activities should be created in the area of the tribal people.
2. Pure drinking water should managed in the area for good health of the tribal.
3. Electricity facility should be ensured for the tribal. Communication facilities should be developed in the area for better socio-economic condition.
4. Activities of government institutions have to expand in this tribal area. Scope of employment opportunity should be increased in the area. Social security to be insured for the tribal of this area.

5. Good relationship among tribal and non-tribal should be settled in the society.

6. Various types of distortion would be managed in the tribal area.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interests any matter related to this paper.

Data and materials availability

All related data have been presented in this paper.

Peer-review

External peer-review was done through double-blind method.

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